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For Immediate Release

\$28.6 million in Dyking Improvements and Six Potential Gravel Removal Sites Identified

Vancouver, BC... The *Fraser River Management Plan: Hope to Mission* Steering Committee identifies \$28.6 million in dyking improvements and six potential gravel removal sites in the Fraser River, to improve flood protection and maintain fish habitat. The Steering Committee and its Technical Committee include representatives from government, the private sector, universities, conservation and recreation groups, brought together by the Fraser Basin Council.

"To meet a new standard in flood protection, \$17.5 million in improvements is needed for the existing dyking system", said Steering Committee Chair David Marshall, Executive Director of the Fraser Basin Council. New dyking projects on First Nations lands are also identified at an additional cost of at least \$11.1 million.

"We've recommended strategic gravel removals of up to 350 000 m³ this year, to help to manage flood levels and maintain navigational safety", said Steering Committee member Hugh Sloan, Director of Planning at the Fraser Valley Regional District.

"We have identified six potential gravel removal sites in the Chilliwack and Agassiz area", said Steering Committee member John Sager from the Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management. These include: Chilliwack Rock navigation channel, Queen's Bar, Harrison Bar, Hamilton Bar, Lower Powerline Bar and Tranmer Bar. Government regulatory agencies are reviewing these potential gravel removal sites, and additional sites in the Fraser's main channel may be identified later this year.

"For sites that may be approved, biological and physical monitoring will be undertaken to learn more about the effects of gravel removal on fish and fish habitat. The results will help fine-tune our strategy for the future," said Steering Committee member Dale Paterson from Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

The recommendations are summarized as part of the Fraser River Management Plan: Hope to Mission, which also identifies a number of best practices for minimizing impacts to fish habitat. Copies of the document are available from the Fraser Basin Council, or on the website --www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/summary13.html.

The Fraser Basin Council, a non-profit organization established in 1997, brings people together to stimulate dialogue, find common ground, and overcome conflict to advance social, economic, and environmental sustainability in the Fraser River Basin. The Council is made up of individuals from throughout the Fraser Basin, and includes representatives from federal, provincial, local and First Nations' governments.

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